THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Government have been, appropriately and effectively, bringing to the attention of the international community facts pertaining to Pakistan's sponsorship of cross-border terrorism in J&K and other parts of India. The issue has also been raised during high level interactions with the world leaders. In the aftermath of December 13 attack, apart from diplomatic and other measures to pressurize Pakistan to give up its support for cross-border terorism the Government sent high level delegations comprising members from both Houses of Parliament, distinguished scholars and former diplomats who visited selected countries in Europe, West Asia, Gulf, South East Asia and Africa. The visiting delegations appropriately and effectively highlighted Pakistan's sponsorship of cross-border terrorism. Similar and consistent effort was also made in various world capitals by Indian Missions abroad.

(b) and (c) The December 13 and May 14 terrorist attacks served to spotlight the fact that the real epicenter of terrorism in our region continued to lie in Pakistan. There is a wide spread international support for India's strong determination to resist terrorism until it is decisively crushed. The consensus in the international community is that there is no justification for terrorism, which must be eradicated wherever it exists, and that Pakistan must put an end to cross-border infiltration and terrorism on a permanent basis.

In its fight against terrorism, India has also received effective operational and policy level co-operation from several countries, including through Joint Working Groups on terrorism.

Visit of U.S. Representatives to defuse Indo-Pak tension

218. SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether in the month of May, 2002 U.S. had sent a number of representatives to defuse Indo-Pak tension;

(b) if so, whether due to the sense of urgency in U.S., a number of steps were taken to reduce the tension between India and Pakistan;

(c) if so, what were the steps taken by the U.S. to urge the Pakistan to restraint;

(d) whether activities of Pakistan had been on increase; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken by Government to meet the threat ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and (b) The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christina Rocca visited India and Pakistan in May 2002 in the face of mounting evidence of increase in cross-border infiltration and terrorist incidents in Jammu and Kashmir. The U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and the U.S. Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld also visited India and Pakistan in June 2002.

(b) and (c) These visits took place in the context of increase in cross-border infiltration and terrorist incidents in Jammu and Kashmir, including the heinous terrorist attack in Kaluchak on 14 May, 2002. Deputy Secretary Armitage and Secretary Rumsfeld conveyed to Government President Musharraf's pledge to the United States on an immediate, visible and permanent end to cross-border infiltration and his assurance to dismantle terrorist camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. They also expressed hope for de-escalatory steps from India on the basis of change in the situation on the ground.

(d) Notwithstanding the commitment by President Musharraf on 12 January, 2002 and repeated on 27 May, 2002 as also his pledge to the United States to end cross-border terrorism, infiltration and terrorist incidents continue in Jammu & Kashmir.

(e) Steps taken by the Government to check infiltration and fight terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir, and its engagement with the international community in this regard, will continue to be in place till there is a permanent cessation of cross-border terrorism from Pakistan.